

# SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER APPLICATION--CLASS 17-01

(Deadline: 12 August 2016)



Contact Email: [STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil](mailto:STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil)

*“First There... That Others May Live”*

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# Special Tactics Officer Assessment

## 1. INTRODUCTION.

Thank you for your interest in the Special Tactics Officer (STO) career field. This document outlines the application procedures for becoming a STO. STOs earn the 13C Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). The ST forces that a STO leads are organized under the 24<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing (SOW) of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). For more information on the career field, you can visit <http://www.24sow.af.mil> or [www.Facebook.com/SpecialTacticsOfficer](http://www.Facebook.com/SpecialTacticsOfficer). Applicants familiar with earlier versions of this package should review this document thoroughly because it has undergone significant revision.

## 2. CAREER FIELD ELIGIBILITY.

Special Tactics Officers require high levels of physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, and technical competency. Additional eligibility criteria are listed below:

- Male or females may apply
- Security clearance: Secret (minimum), Top Secret-attainable
- Retention: Six years (STO trainees will incur six year active duty service commitment, upon completion of training pipeline)
- Volunteer for Hazardous Duty: Parachute (Static-line and Freefall) and Combat Diver (SCUBA) duty
- Background: Outstanding resume and no negative personal history
- Medical/Physical: IFC III Flying Physical (SWIC) as outlined in this package
- Physical Fitness: At a minimum, candidates must satisfactorily complete the minimum scores on the PT Evaluation.

## 3. STO APPLICATION PROCEDURES.

Two STO Assessments are conducted each year. Each cycle has two phases: Phase I and Phase II. In Phase I, a panel of officers reviews and stratifies applications submitted by the deadline. The top applicants are invited to attend Phase II Selection. Phase II consists of a one-week evaluation conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL, approximately 75 days after Phase I. Candidates must attend Phase II in TDY status. AFSOC will fund Phase II attendance for candidates.

Upon completion of Phase II evaluated events, the 24 SOW Commander makes his selection of new STOs. Applicants will be briefed on their select/non-select status upon completing Phase II. The schedule for the two selection cycles is as follows:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Mid- January | Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director (Phase II likely in March)   |
| Mid - August | Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director (Phase II likely in October) |

Receiving an invitation to Phase II means the Phase I selection board would like to take a closer look at your potential to become a STO. Your decision to attend is voluntary and non-binding. Being selected at Phase II means the selection board president has approved your entry into the career field and pipeline training. It is ultimately up to you to accept the challenge.

**AFROTC/USAF Academy Cadets:** Cadets should submit a Phase I package before they are classified in another AFSC, ideally, at least 12-18 months before forecasted commissioning date. ROTC cadets must have successfully completed Field Training before applying. USAFA cadets should apply in their Second Class year. Senior cadets are not prohibited from applying; however, these applications will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the Line Officer Accessions Program Manager at AFPC. In most cases, cadets will be allowed to attend Phase II on a contingent release from their assigned career field.

**Inter-service Transfers:** Officers in other services seeking to apply should reference AFI 36-2004 *Inter-service Transfer of Officer*. You should submit your STO application to the ST Phase I selection board before a service transfer is approved. However, you must include in your application a letter from your commander supporting this transfer, in lieu of career field releasability by an AFPC functional manager. Selection at Phase II does not guarantee an approved inter-service transfer; the processes are independent of each other. It is highly recommended that this process be started at least six months in advance of Phase II due to the

time required to complete a transfer. For additional information, contact the ST Assessment Director.

**Officer Training School:** Enlisted members who desire to attend OTS and become a STO should first ensure they are eligible. This link outlines current requirements: <https://randolph.eis.aetc.af.mil/afrs/AFRSHQ/rso/RSOC/RSOCL/default.aspx>. Candidates will be required to clear AFRS/RSOC before being invited to attend Phase II. Upon selection from Phase II, you will submit an OTS package. Selection at Phase II doesn't guarantee acceptance into OTS- you must still meet the requirements outlined by AF Recruiting Service (AFRS) to enter OTS and earn a commission. Applications from civilian candidates will not be considered. Civilians are encouraged to enlist as combat controllers, and apply to Phase I and OTS at the appropriate time in their careers.

**Active Duty USAF:** Open to 0-3 and below. Applicants must obtain release from their AFPC functional manager to cross train into STO. If the functional manager does not support cross-training at the time of your application you will not be selected to attend Phase II. The ST Assessment Director has no authority to interfere with another career field's manning requirements.

**Civilians:** The Air Force is accepting civilian applications for Special Tactic Officer on a case-by-case basis. Interested civilians should contact Headquarters Air Force Recruiting Service Line Officer Accessions @ [HQRSOCL@us.af.mil](mailto:HQRSOCL@us.af.mil) for further details.

**First-Time Non-Selects:** Candidates who attend Phase II but are not selected are not guaranteed a Phase II invitation in future selection cycles. If the cadre identify deficiencies/weaknesses that they would like to see corrected before accepting you into the ST community, you must submit an updated application that addresses those deficiencies.

#### 4. **PHASE I**

Phase I applications are due by the date posted on the top of each cycle's application. The ST Assessment Director does an initial review of the applications to ensure required information is included. The ST Assessment Director convenes a review board consisting of STOs. The board ranks the applications, identifying the candidates most likely to succeed. The 24<sup>th</sup> SOW commander has final authority to invite applicants. Once invitations are sent, the ST Assessment Director contacts the individuals with Phase II reporting instructions.

The ST Assessment Director designates the candidate team leader. At that time, the team is encouraged to begin team building via email and other means. The more cohesive the team is prior to arrival, the better the team interaction will be during Phase II, enhancing everyone's chances to be selected. The team leader is the primary means of contacting the ST Assessment Director for assessment-related matters. The ST Assessment Director is your definitive resource for all policy, continuity, and information on Phase II.

Applications from candidates are stored for Phase II cadre to gain an initial impression of the team members. All non-invited applicants may request feedback on their applications from the ST Assessment Director. If you do not hear from the ST Assessment Director within 45 days of submitting your application, contact them for details.

**Read through ANNEX A for complete instructions and guidance on constructing your Phase I package.**

#### 5. **PHASE II**

Phase II Selection is conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL. The purpose of Phase II is to assess each candidate in the ST attributes for the purpose of determining if you have the raw skills to operate in the Special Operations environment. Your performance will be evaluated as a team member and as an individual. The schedule is designed to stress you. The ST cadre will observe and take notes on everything you do. These observations will be the basis for a hiring recommendation made to the 24<sup>th</sup> SOW Commander. The data will also be used to provide critical feedback to enhance your personal and professional growth.

Candidates must be prepared for a physically and mentally demanding week. You cannot trust your judgment of your physical and mental preparedness prior to coming to Phase II. Feedback from most candidates indicates that this week is more demanding than anything they anticipated. The cadre will push you physically and mentally beyond your comfort zone to assess those critical attributes in adverse situations. You will be expected to perform to the best of your ability in all events.

Billeting will be coordinated for all candidates. Candidates will be billeted together for the duration of Phase II. The candidate team leader is responsible for passing travel and contact information for all candidates. The first person to check in will be responsible for facilitating the in-processing of additional candidates. When the

candidate team leader arrives, he must check in with the ST Assessment Director for further instructions.

There are four ways to be dismissed during Phase II. Failure to pass the PT Evaluation during Phase II is grounds for immediate dismissal. Medical disqualification results from a medical assessment to determine your ability to safely continue Phase II. Self-Initiated Elimination (SIE) means that you no longer wish to continue in the assessment. Additionally, Quitting by Action (QBA) is a Phase II policy that allows the Phase II cadre to give you warnings during an assessment event, for demonstrating lack of motivation to continue or perform at the required level of effort. If a candidate SIE's or QBA's, they will not be considered again for assessment.

Candidates should be prepared for the following:

- Extensive psychological testing and interviews
- Briefing and writing skills evaluations
- Problem solving events
- Leadership ability evaluations
- Ruckmarches with 50 – 70 lbs of weight at distances up to 12 miles
- Running for distances up to 8 miles at a time
- Calisthenics sessions of various exercises
- Water confidence evaluations, to include:
  - o Under water swim intervals at 25 meters and 50 meters
  - o Mask and Snorkel recovery
  - o Buddy breathing
  - o Treading
  - o Drown proofing
  - o Surface swimming

**Note: Practicing sub surface water confidence is highly encouraged, but practicing without a swim buddy is dangerous and not condoned by Special Tactics.**

Those candidates who successfully complete Phase II and are selected can expect PCS orders to Hurlburt Field. PCS timeframe will be coordinated with the losing command via AFPC. The ST Assessment Director will work with you throughout this process.

After you PCS, you will maintain a physical training regimen, and complete various in-house training between pipeline schools. This arrangement is designed to enhance your awareness of Special Tactics missions, maintain your motivation, and foster professional development as a STO. After the Training Office schedules your pipeline sequence, you will enter the training pipeline; you will be returning to Hurlburt Field after each school.

# ANNEX A

## STO Phase I Application Instructions & Example

### **PHASE I APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Proof read your application for accuracy, format, grammar, and spelling. In Phase I, the selection board relies solely on information and impressions made through your application. Incomplete or poorly crafted applications are a reflection of the applicant's professionalism. As a general rule, successful Phase I applications are concise, easy to understand, and are not filled with extra "fluff." Your success in the ST community begins with this application.

#### **The application will include the following in this order:**

1. Cover page – Use Times New Roman and Font size 10
2. Personal Narrative – One page in length (See example for format and specifics)
3. One page résumé, emphasize leadership experience. (See example for format)
4. One signed recommendation letter from your commander, no more than one-page in length. The letter should comment on your leadership abilities including relevant examples.
5. Copies of the three most recent performance or training reports, cadet evaluations, etc. If your time in service is too short to have three reports, include what is available.
6. A signed statement documenting sister service or AFPC-approved career field release.
7. A signed statement from a medical authority documenting the medical facility and date of your most recent physical examination.

***Every effort*** should be made to accomplish an IFC III Physical Examination (Special Warfare Instruction Center, SWIC) prior to applying to Phase I. If this is not possible, include details of the type of examination administered. Include the name and contact information of the Flight Surgeon (or sister service equivalent) that accomplished the examination. You may attend Phase II with an incomplete IFC III physical, however your selection at Phase II will be contingent upon its completion and certification. Do not include any portion of your medical records or any privileged medical information in your application. The Battlefield Airman Clinic (BFAC) will review your records electronically, if possible. If host base Force Health/Flight Medicine is unfamiliar with SWIC physical procedures, have them contact Hurlburt Field Battlefield Airman Clinic at DSN 579-3702 (Comm: 850-884-3702) for assistance.

When complete, your application should be scanned into a PDF file as **ONE DOCUMENT**, and sent via signed official email (.gov or .mil) to [STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil](mailto:STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil). Put your last name and "STO Application" in the subject line of the email, such as "Johnson-STO Application". For cadets that do not have access to official email, have an active duty leader send it in for you.

#### **Additional Notes:**

- The format on the next pages is not an option. Follow the example. Do not include the footer you see below that says: "Current as of DATE". Page numbers are not needed.
- If the header or section does not apply to your situation, simply delete that section.
- Be sure that all signature blocks are hand signed either by wet ink or a stylus.

**STO APPLICATION PACKAGE**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name/Rank:** 1Lt John B. Doe

**Work Address:** 123 Main Street, Hurlburt Field, FL 32544

**Email:** john.doe@hurlburt.af.mil

**Phone:** 850-555-1234

**Duty Title:** Logistics Training Flight Commander

**Branch of Service:** USAF    **AFSC/MOS:** 21A1

**Commissioning Source:** USAF Academy

**Commissioning Date (Month / Year):** May 2010

**Cumulative GPA:** 3.2        **Major:** B.S. Humanities

**INSERT YOUR PHOTO HERE.**

The photo should be a forward facing portrait against a white background. You should be in service dress and the photo should extend from the bottom of your name tag/bottom of your ribbon rack to the top of your head.

If an official photo lab is not available, use a digital camera and stand against a white wall with nothing in the background.

**Attended Phase II / SOCOM Training:** Yes / No    **If yes, when:** (Month, Year)    CRO, STO, SOWT, PDT, Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Commander Name/Rank:** Major John Smith  
**Email/Phone:** john.smith@hurlburt.af.mil / 850-678-1234

**Functional Manager Name/Rank:** Capt Jane H  
**Email/Phone:** john.smith@hurlburt.af.mil / 850-789-3456

**PT Test Results**

**PT Test Date:**

**Pull-ups** \_\_\_ **Sit-ups** \_\_\_ **Push-ups** \_\_\_

**3 Mile run** \_\_\_ mins \_\_\_ secs

**25 meter underwater swim ( Pass / Fail )**

**1500 meter swim** \_\_\_ mins \_\_\_ secs

**Administrator Name/Rank:**

**Contact (Email/Phone):**

**Administrator Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate acknowledgment statement: "I, (Insert Name Here), hereby apply to become a Special Tactics Officer and volunteer to perform the hazardous duties inherent to Special Tactics. I acknowledge that I can be removed from further assessment for any of the following reasons: 1) quitting through words or actions, 2) becoming a medical or safety risk, 3) committing an integrity violation such as lying, cheating, or stealing, or 4) failing to meet specified fitness standards. I further acknowledge that upon graduation of training, I will incur a six-year active duty service commitment in accordance with AFI36-2107 *Active Duty Service Commitments*, Rule 25, Note 16. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true."

**Candidate Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Personal Narrative

1. This document is provided to give the selection board an overall understanding of your character and personality. It should be clear, concise, and free of extra “fluff” statements.

It should include:

1. Your personal background, such as where you grew up, significant jobs/positions held, and/or an explanation of your experiences and involvements before and during military service
2. An identification and explanation of your perceived strengths and weaknesses
3. A discussion on what attracts you to become a Special Tactics Officer
4. Why Special Tactics Officer is the right career for you

2. The narrative will be formatted with 1 inch margins on the left and right sides. The top margin will be between 1 inch and 1.5 inches depending on the heading you establish. The bottom will be 1 inch and will include the Special Tactics motto: “*First There... That Others May Live*”.

3. The heading format you see above should be followed with your own information entered in the FROM portion. The document may not exceed more than one page in length. Use Times New Roman with font size 12. Include a crest in the upper left hand corner of your header similar to an official memorandum for record. See AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill* or sister service equivalent for examples of an Official Memorandum for Record.



JOHN A. DOE, 1st Lieutenant, USAF  
Logistics Training Flight Commander

## PERSONAL RESUME

John Doe  
1st Lt, USAF

SSAN: XXX-XX-XXXX  
DOB: XX DEC XX  
AGE: XX

### SERVICE HISTORY

Sept 14 – Present

*Logistics Training Flight Commander, 33LSS, Eglin AFB, FL.* Leads 15 personnel in five function elements. Manages all logistics training programs. Ensures dissemination of higher headquarters training directives throughout the wing. Develops monthly training plans and schedules training events for 2,200 wing personnel. Monitors and directs the on-the-job training program for over 1,600 enlisted personnel. Provides monthly status of training briefing for all commanders. Maintains and controls over \$50M in training assets. Advisor to Wing Commander on issues.

Jan 14 – May 14

*Cadet Squadron Commander, US Air Force Academy,* supervised discipline, training, and safety of 104 cadets...

**Cadets from USAFA and AFROTC should highlight any applicable leadership experiences or participation in any preparation programs in this section as well. Use Times New Roman and font size 10.**

### EDUCATION

B.S. Professional Aeronautics	Embry Riddle Aeronautical University	2010
A.A.S. Industrial Management	Northwest Florida State College	2010
A.A.S. Airway Science	Community College of the Air Force	2008

### PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (If applicable)

Non Commissioned Officer Academy	2010
Airman Leadership School	2007

### CERTIFICATION/AWARDS

USAFA Distinguished Graduate  
Army Air Airborne  
EMT Basic Certification  
PADI Open Water Diver Certification  
USAFA Superintendents List (Fall 08, Spring 09, Fall 10, Spring 10)

### PERSONAL INTERESTS

Fly Fishing, fitness, reading, skiing, rock climbing

Additional Parts of Application:

- Letter of Recommendation will be formatted according to AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill* or sister service equivalent.
- Training reports for active duty members are already formatted using an Air Force form.
- Cadet training reports do not have a required format, but should be three separate documentations of available Field Training reports for AFROTC or CPR-II items for USAFA cadets.
- For the Approval for Release have a signed statement releasing you from Sister- Service (first O-6 in the chain) or AFPC approved career field release.
- A signed statement documenting the medical facility and date of your most recent physical examination

If you have additional questions contact: [STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil](mailto:STO.Recruiter@hurlburt.af.mil)

## ANNEX B

### **STO PT EVALUATION STANDARDS**

**General.** Officer and cadet Special Tactics applicants shall complete the physical training test in accordance with these procedures as part of the Special Tactics officer application. This test is based on the Special Tactics operator physical training standards/evaluation test described in AFI 13-219, *Special Tactics Operator Standards and Evaluation Program*. The added underwater swim portion of the PT Evaluation and the swim without fins is a modification for ST Officer Selection purposes only.

**Standards.** You must complete the minimum number of exercises, and run and swim within the times specified below. STO selection is extremely competitive; you should give your very best effort, which should be well beyond the minimums. When you submit your application, your PT Eval should have been accomplished within three months of the Phase I due date, and as close to Phase I as possible to reflect your current level of fitness.

CALISTHENICS: pull-ups, sit-ups, push-ups -- exercise to time limit or until muscle failure

- Minimums:
  - 12 pull-ups in 1 minute
  - 75 sit-ups in 2 minutes
  - 64 push-ups in 2 minutes

RUN: 3 miles non-stop

- Minimums:
  - 3 miles completed within 22 minutes (22:00)

UNDERWATER SWIM: swim and remain underwater for 25 meters

- Minimums:
  - Successful completion

SWIM: 1500 meters non-stop -- any stroke except backstroke (with or without fins)

- Minimums:
  - 1500 m completed within 32 minutes

**Administration.** The PT test must be given in the order listed and completed within a three-hour timeframe. If you are unable to meet any of the minimums, you have failed the test. The PT test should be administered by your supervisor, such as an ROTC instructor or USAFA AOC. Other test administrators will be considered on a case-by-case basis, following coordination with the ST Assessment Director. If you fail to execute the proper form, the test administrator will correct you, and the incorrect repetition will not be counted. The test administrator will document the results on the cover sheet of your application and sign in the appropriate space. Each candidate and administrator should watch the instructional video posted at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zdKD0VMKWg&feature=plcp&context=C3f31946UDOEgsToPDskJY7F3h01Zie0ZF9II5EP11>. The video should be used a guide for exercise form ONLY, the repetition and time standards referenced do not apply to officer candidates.

**Procedures.** Calisthenics events will be tested one right after the other with approximately a 2-minute time lapse between events. Upon completion of all the calisthenics events, a 10-minute rest period is given prior to starting the 3-mile run. Upon completion of the 3-mile run, a 20-minute rest period is given prior to starting the underwater swim. 10 minutes after the underwater swim, begin the 1500 meter swim.

- **Pull-ups (one minute time limit).** This exercise is executed on a pull-up bar. The individual grasps the bar with the hands about shoulder width apart. Hands can be facing toward the candidate (chin up) or away from the candidate (pull up). This is a two-count exercise. The exercise begins in the “dead hang” position. Count one: pull the body directly upward until the chin is over the bar. Count two: lower the body until the body is again in the “dead hang” position. Repeat as many times as possible. Individuals will not swing excessively or bicycle feet as the chin is pulled over the bar. Legs are allowed to bend, but

must not be kicked or manipulated to aid upward movement. If the candidate falls off or releases the bar, the exercise is terminated. Designed to measure strength and endurance in the back, triceps, and biceps muscles used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.

- **Sit-ups (two minute time limit).** Starting position: back flat on the ground, hands behind the head, fingers interlocked, head off the ground and knees bent at approximately a 90 degree angle. Another individual during the exercise holds the feet (optional). This is a two-count exercise. Count one: sit up until the back is vertical, breaking a 90 degree plane with the ground. Count two: return to the starting position. There is no authorized rest position during this exercise. If the candidate rests, the exercise is terminated. If an individual raises buttocks from ground, removes hands from behind the head during a repetition, or the fingers are not interlocked, the repetition is not counted. Designed to measure strength and endurance in abdominal and hip flexor muscle groups used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Push-ups (two minute time limit).** This exercise starts from the front leaning rest position. The body must be maintained straight from head to heels with knees together. This is a two-count exercise. Count one: flex the elbows, lowering the body until the arm is bent at least 90 degrees at the elbow and the upper arm breaks a parallel plane with the ground. Count two: raise the body until the elbows are straight and locked. Repeat this exercise as many times as possible. The candidate will not raise his buttocks in the air, sag his middle to the ground, or raise any hand or foot from their starting position. If a hand or foot is raised, the exercise is terminated. The only authorized rest position is the starting position. Designed to measure the strength and endurance of the chest and triceps muscles used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Three Mile Run.** Performed with running shoes and running shorts. This run must be continuous (non-stop). If a candidate stops anytime during the run, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. The test should be conducted on a measured running track. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event is followed by a 20-minute rest period prior to the underwater swim.
- **Underwater Swim.** The 25-meter underwater swim should be demonstrated first either through actual demonstration or by use of training video already supplied to recruiting squadrons. If candidates surface or break the water surface during any portion of the swim, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. Swimsuits and swim goggles are the only equipment items allowed. Allow a 10-minute rest period prior to the 1500 meter swim. Candidates should carefully stretch for the swim during this break time.
- **1500 Meter Swim.** The swim will be performed with swim trunks and mask or goggles, with or without fins, in a lap pool. Ensure that you complete 1500 meters, not 1500 yards. This swim must be continuous (non-stop). If you stop anytime during the swim, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. Designed to measure aerobic endurance in a maritime environment.